

*Destry after 20/8/47*

File No. F. 18(1) 25(47)-ME/47. *1947* *File No - 18(1)-ME/47* *Confidential* *no copy*

Notes.

Government of India,  
External Affairs Department,  
Middle East Branch.

*DR* *Ansari*  
*Hajji*  
Print. No. (1) — (8)

Subject.  
Indian Trade Delegation to the Middle East.

Previous References. | Later References

*Total page - 19.*

3-57 (Unpublished).  
N.D.P.C.—R.S.—2007 (Rev.) 2007—2008 (L.D. 2007) — 2008—2009

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

(copy) C.O on C.D. File J-  
(Commerce Department)

It has been decided, with the concurrence of the Finance Department, to send an Indian Trade Delegation to the Middle East. It will consist of the following:-

Mr. M. A. H. Isphani of Messrs. Isphani & Co., Calcutta. Leader

Mr. Heridas Patel, Honorary Secretary Buyers & Shipping Chamber, Karachi. Member.

Mr. Haji Dawood Shiey Habib of Messrs. H. Habib & Sons, Bombay. Member.

Mr. Chinoochhai C. Javeri, Honorary Secretary, All-India Exporters Association, Bombay Member

Mr. Ibrahim Yousuf Zainal Alireza of Bombay. Advisor.

Mr. M. Ayub, M.B.E., I.C.S., will act as Secretary to the Delegation and will probably be accompanied by three members of the Office staff.

2. The delegation will visit the following countries:-

Iran, Iraq, Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Sudan, and Hedjaz.

It is possible that Palestine and Transjordan might also be paid a short visit by one or two members of the Delegation during their stay in Syria.

3. The purpose of the Delegation will be to make a brief survey of trade in the Middle East countries with special reference to their trade with India, particularly their potentialities as markets for Indian goods and manufactures, and to suggest ways and means for the rehabilitation and development of Indian trade with those countries.

4. The delegation hopes to leave Karachi on the 9th March by air, reaching Basra the same evening. Thereafter their halts, exclusive of the travelling period, will be as follows

Basra	..	2 days.
Bagdad	..	4 days.
Istanbul	..	6 days.
Damascus	..	3 days.
Beirut	..	5 days.

Inkara ... 4 days.  
Izmir ... 1 day.  
Istanbul ... 5 days.  
Cairo and  
Alexandria ... 14 days.  
Hedjaz/Sudan ... 4 days.

5. The External Affairs Department may see for information. That Department will no doubt wish to communicate the programme of the Delegation to the British Embassies and Legations stationed in the countries to be visited. The Government=s of those countries have already been approached through the Indian Trade Commissioners at Alexandria and Tehran for co-operation in the work of the Delegation, and their reactions are reported to be favourable.

6. E.A. Department may also be requested to inform the Consulates in India of the countries to be visited, about the proposed visit of the Indian Trade Delegation to the Middle East.

Sd/- Banerjee.  
26/2/47.

External Affairs Department u.o.R.  
C.I.U.O.No.98-Adm./C/47.dt.22-2-47-

(E.A. Department)

26/2/47. We may inform the British Embassies and Legations concerned.

Draft telegram put up.

2. There seems no point in addressing the foreign consulates as desired by Commerce Department in para.6 of their note above, and we need not address them.

Itd. A1. Itd. M. 9.  
26/2/47 25A2/47.

1) Mr.Banerjee informs me that the Indian Trade Commissioner in Tehran is accredited to Persia only; the Indian Trade Commissioner in Alexandria is accredited to all the countries mentioned in para 2 of the note on page except Iran.

I am told that the Governments of all the countries concerned accepted these appointments.

2) Mr.Banerjee says that the Governments concerned have already been approached informally by these Trade Commissioners and, except Iraq whose reply has not yet been received, have signified to the Trade Commissioners their informal approval of the arrangements.

Commerce Department apparently now wished this Department to obtain official approval of the countries concerned to the visit of the Delegation though this was not made clear in para 6 of Mr.Banerjee's note, above.

Sd/- R.L.R. 3rd  
26/2/47. P.M.O.

J.S.(X).

It would have been more appropriate for this Deptt. to have been consulted at an earlier stage regarding the proposal to send a Trade Delegation to the Middle East. Moreover the initial approach to a foreign government regarding the reception of any delegation should be through diplomatic channels rather than through the Trade Commissioner. Since, however, soundings have apparently already been taken of the Govts. concerned and plans have been completed, we had better address the Diplomatic Missions in the countries to be visited as in the draft below.

Sd/-C. D. Duke.  
26-2-47.

While it may be reasonable to lump Cairo & Alexandria together as a 14-day commitment in a programme of this sort, but not "Hejaz" & Sudan which are large territories on opposite sides of the Red Sea. Possibly this delegation may be splitting by that time but if so why not say so.

Also Ibn Saud will not give carte blanche to visit Hejaz. I presume the delegation will go to Jeddah. If so why not say so. Please get this cleared up with Commerce Department.

2. I entirely agree with Mr. Duke's comments on the method of approach & Commerce Department's attention should be drawn to them. I am surprised to hear that the Alexandria Trade Commission is "accredited" to all these countries except Persia & should also glad to see this formally confirmed by Commerce Department.

3. When the file comes back it should be resubmitted for H.M.'s information.

Sd/-H. Weightman.  
27/2/47.

Pass to Commerce Department with reference to Foreign Secretary's note.

Sd/-R. E. R. Bird.  
27/2/47.

*copy*  
Anil (initials)  
2/2

*c.d.*  
24.2.47 A. 2 791. HC (4), 27. 2. 47

Commerce Department.

The Delegation would split up at Cairo before going to Hedjaz. Only Jeddah and Mecca would be visited in Hedjaz. We should be glad if the telegram would issue with such modifications as may be necessary in the light of the information given in this note. As regards the countries mentioned in para. 2 of Mr. Weightman's note all of them-with the exception of Persia-are included in the jurisdiction of the Trade Commissioner at Alexandria.

Sd/-Y.N. Sankhanji,  
Additional Secretary.  
28/2/47.

S.A. Department (Mr. Weightman)  
u.s.o.100-Addl.Secy/47.

H.M. should now see these notes and the draft.

Sd/-H. Weightman,  
28/2/47.

H.M.

I agree with Mr. Weightman's and Mr. Duke's notes above. Any approach in regard to a trade or any other delegation going abroad should be made through Diplomatic Channels. Any other method might well lead to complications and possibly to difficulties of various kinds. Our delegations abroad should not overlap or work independently of each other or of the general foreign policy of this Govt. Hence it is necessary that S.A. Department should keep in constant touch with all such proposals from their very inception.

The draft telegram might issue. The Commerce Deptt's attention might however be drawn again to the procedure suggested above and they should be requested to keep External Affairs Department informed of all developments in connection with this Delegation's tour.

Sd/-J. Nehru.  
1/3/47.

(1)- Issue

Issue and then action as in H.M's note.

Sd/-H. J.  
1/3/47.

c.D.

mk  
1/3/47.

5  
Ref. te copy on first page of te noting on  
Commerce Dept's file regarding te Trade  
delegation ad te extract below of today's  
Statement

a constitution  
API.

INDIA-PERSIA PASSPORT  
DIFFICULTIES

KARACHI, Mar 8.—The members  
of the Indian delegation to the Middle  
East countries today met the leading  
members of the Indian mercantile  
community in Karachi who pointed  
out to them their difficulties regarding  
passports and exchange in Persia  
and other places.

Mr. Jeshtharam Bhawani, Vice-  
Chairman of the Buyers and Ship-  
pers Chamber, suggested to the delega-  
tion the appointment of trade com-  
missioners of the Middle East coun-  
tries in India which would enable  
merchants in this country to obtain  
full information about trade in those  
countries.

Mr. Isphani, leader of the delega-  
tion, said that they would do their  
best to improve trade relations be-  
tween India and the Middle East coun-  
tries.

He referred to the present condi-  
tions which did not permit free trade  
between one country and another but  
hoped that normal conditions would  
return very soon, and with it the free  
trade conditions. He assured the  
members that they would do their best  
for the removal of the exchange and  
other difficulties mentioned, and said  
that on their return they would submit  
a report of their work which  
would contain full data for the im-  
provement of trade and friendly re-  
lations with the Middle East countries.

The delegation will leave for Barran  
tomorrow—API.

Statement

10. 3. 1947.

A draft v.v. note to Commerce Dept is placed  
below.

Blundell

1673

DS (X)

Shown to F.C. who prefers to take no action at this  
stage. If eventually they do get into difficulties we can say  
"we told you so".

W.H.C.  
11/3  
WS (P.S.C.)

11/3  
11/3

Blundell  
11/3/47.

(E.A. Department).

D. No. 1279-M.E/47.

(2).

For information. A copy has gone to Commerce Deptt.

11/3/47  
11/3 q. re right address of an  
telep. at no. 111, m/s kharlam  
no reply so far.

labeled  
11/3  
U.S.C.E.  
FAC  
11/3

D. no. 1335-M.E/47.

(3).

For information A copy

has gone to Commerce Deptt.

12.1.47

labeled  
11/3 U.S.C.E.

U.S.C.E.  
FAC  
11/3

D. 1353-M.E/47. + 1356-M.E/47. (4) - (5) F.R.

For information. Reply on file

13/3/47. award in Damacus, Barus.

Cairo & Penda.

11/3  
U.S.C.E.

You may care to see S4

labeled

11/3 D. 1353

TSX/T Abdule -

14/3/47. For award us (B.M.A)

U.S.C.E.  
FAC

D. 1369-M.E/47.

(6)

For information

15/3/47  
11/3

labeled  
11/3 U.S.C.E.  
FAC

-7.  
(E.A. Deptt.)

F.R. D. No. 1403-ME/47 (7)

For information. Press reports indicate  
that the Delegation has already reached  
Baghdad.

Re  
17/3/47

7.3.47

~~Has been~~ Have all the countries concerned  
replied now? *Unpaid*  
1873

No. reply on file await  
from Japan, Beni, + Cais + Persia

US (ME) 18.3.47

*Unpaid*  
1873

M.F.R. D. No. 1456-ME/47 (8)

For information. SNo. (8) is the Ankara Telegraph  
at SNo. (7) repeated to us by India office  
No office's have been in U.D.  
No need to trouble US (ME)

Re  
19/3/47

19/3

~~Ans. 100~~  
~~Ans. 100~~  
~~Ans. 100~~  
~~Ans. 100~~

~~Ans. 100~~  
~~Ans. 100~~  
~~Ans. 100~~

~~Ans. 100~~  
~~Ans. 100~~  
~~Ans. 100~~

*Dy. 3278 ME 47*

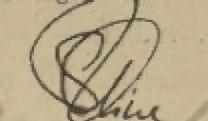
An Indian Trade Delegation consisting of Mr. Ispahani of Calcutta and 4 members (two Hindus and two Muslims) arrived in Tehran on 20th March. The Embassy and the Indian Trade Commissioner, Major Hasan, did their best to persuade the Delegation to come either a week earlier or a week later, as the Persian New Year holidays began on 21st March, and everyone including Prime Minister, was likely to be out of town for at least a week; but they insisted on coming just then.

2. The Delegation did not seem to be seriously interested in Indo-Persian trade ~~method~~. Under the guidance of the I.G.T.C they went through the ~~process~~ of discussing commercial questions with leading officials and merchants both at Tehran and at Isfahan. But they seemed to carry no authority to initiate negotiations or commit the Govt. of India in any way, and they disappointed the Persians very much by being unable to promise redress of any of their grievances (e.g. alleged discrimination against Persia in the matter of price ceilings of cotton piecegoods exported from India to Persia). But Mr. Ispahani had with him a Private Secretary, Mian Jamaluddin, who is a Joint Secretary of the Muslim League in U.P. and it soon became obvious that they, if not ~~other~~ members, have come on a political mission on behalf of Muslim League.

A few days after the Delegation arrived one of the Prime Minister's most trusted assistants, Nikpay, came to the Ambassador with a request from the Qawam for information as to the political situation in India and advice as to the line he should take with Ispahani who was asking for an interview. The Ambassador sent for me and asked to give Mr. Nikpay a brief account of the events which had led up to HMG's announcement of February 20th last. I spent an hour trying to summarise political developments since the Cripps Mission, keeping strictly to facts and giving no opinions or forecasts. The Ambassador explained to Nikpay that he could not possibly give the Prime Minister any advice one way or the other. ~~He~~ He must think things out for himself. I gave Nikpay a copy of the announcement of February 20th and

a large map of India with the Provinces claimed by Pakistan marked on it.

4. Messrs Ispahani and Jamaluddin duly went to Lahijan and had two hours with the Prime Minister. Afterwards I was assured by the Chief de Protocol, M. Sami, one of the brighter lights at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, that a decision on the question of receiving an Indian Mission had been deferred. It may be inferred that Ispahani's mission was not without effect though he himself told me that he had been unable to get anything whatever out of the P.M. whom he described as cagey and unresponsive to a degree.



(Sir P. Narine)  
6. 6. 1947.

① We have made no overtures to Pakistan.  
② FS. told the Hilmat mission that they might as well wait & do nothing, & that, if any overture was made to them from the Indian Govt., it would appear the decision of the whole Govt.

Answered.

FS. 7/6/47.  
Zulha li  
7.6.47

I have conveyed the substance of  
Sir Percival's note to H.M.

+ P. Bapuji  
17. 6. 47

FS. Zulha li  
7.6.47

BS (A.E.)  
Recd (A.E.) 24/6  
Recd (A.E.) 24/6  
Recd (A.E.) 24/6

7/6

Recd  
Recd

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Recd

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Recd

File No. F. 100-  
1947.

Collection No.

Correspondence.

1947.

Government of India,

External Affairs Department,

Middle East Branch.

Proc.  
Serial No.

Subject

Indian Trade Delegation to the Middle East.

Previous References

Later References

Telegram GTC No. 1707 dated 2nd March 1947  
 From.... Governor General (External Affairs Department) New Delhi  
 To.... Pardome, Tehran, ~~SAF~~  
 Baghdad, ~~SAF~~  
 Ankara - ~~SAF~~  
 Damascus  
 Beirut  
 Cairo  
 Jeddah  
 ✓ Governor-General, Sudan Khartoum. ~~SAF (2)~~

(Repeated Secretary of State for India, London)

Government of India desire to send Trade Delegation to Middle Eastern countries to survey their possibilities as markets for Indian goods and to suggest means for development of Indian trade with those countries. Delegation will consist of following five representatives of leading firms traveling to Middle East:

M. A. H. Ispahani,  
 Heridas Laljee,  
 Haji Dewood Bhoy Habib  
 Chinchobhai O Javeri and  
 Ebrahim Yousef Zainal Alireza,

with an official, M. Ayub, I.C.S. as Secretary.

2. Delegation would like to leave Karachi on March 9th by air for Basra and make a tour as follows exclusive of travelling times:

Basra	2 days.
Baghdad	4 "
Tehran	8 "
Demascus	3 "
Beirut	3 "
Ankara	4 "
Izmir	1 day
Istanbul	5 days
Cairo and Alexandria	14 days.

The Delegation would then divide, one half visiting Jerusalem and Mecca and the other the Sudan, each taking 4 days.

3. Government of India would be grateful if you would kindly approach Government to which you are accredited, if you see no objection, for formal agreement to receive Delegation.

It is understood that soundings already taken informally indicate acquiescence of Governments concerned.

TELEGRAM G.T.C.

(2)  
12-

5190

From.....Hakimam, Khertoun.  
To.....Foreign, New Delhi.

No. 2809

Dated 9th (recd. 10th) March 1947.

T.O.O. 1800  
T.O.R. 0600

✓ SN(J)

Your 1707. I warmly welcome proposed visit Indian  
Trade Delegation and shall be delighted to accord them every  
facility.

HM: PS to HM: MF Branch: (3) E.A. Department: (All Officers)  
PSV: Cabinet Secretary: copy to Commerce Department:

PJN  
10/3/47

12-  
Dy. 1335-ML(4)

3  
TELEGRAM GRADE 'C'

CONFIDENTIAL  
3281

From.....Ambassador, Baghdad,  
To.....Foreign, New Delhi.  
No. 32 (Repeated Basra).

Dated 11th (received 12th) March 1947.

T.O.O. 1945  
T.O.R. 0745

IMMEDIATE

Restricted

✓SM (1)

Your telegram No. 1707.

Indian Trade Delegation. Iraqi Government have officially informed me that Delegation will be afforded every assistance during their stay here.

-----  
HM PS TO HM M.E. BR(3) E.L. DEPTT: (ALL OFFICERS) PSV  
& CABINET SECRETARY COPY TO COMMERCE DEPTT:

D.Z.B. (37)

Received & typed 12.3.47.

-----  
COPY TO COMMERCE DEPTT.

14-  
(4)

Py. 1352<sup>(a)</sup> 16/3/47

TELEGRAM GRADE 'C'

CONFIDENTIAL '1

From..... Ambassador, Tehran

To..... Commerce, Department, New Delhi.

No. 80

Dated 11th (received 12th) March 1947.

T.O.O. 0600

T.O.R. 1220

Following from Hassan\* for\* Banerjee.

Iranian Government have\* formally assured\*

co-operation in making\* visit of Delegation a success.

.....  
HM: SECY & COMMERCE DEPTT (2) EA DT (JS(C) & US(1T))

2/3/47.

NATIONAL

15

DY. 1356 MCT 147

ME BR (3)  
Mr. K. A. J.

(5)

3344

Telegram G.T.C.

From..... Ambassador, Ankara.  
To..... Government of India repeated to Foreign Office  
No 14 for India Office.  
Dated 11th (recd 12th) March 1947.

T.O.O. 1325  
T.O.R. 0730

.....  
S.N.C.U.

Your telegram No 1707: visit of Indian Trade  
Delegation to Turkey.

I have approached Turkish Government who  
although they have not yet replied officially have indicated  
that visit would be welcomed.

.....

HM: PS TO HM: ME BR(3) EA DT (ALL OFFICERS) PSV CABINET SECY  
& COPY TO COMMERCE DT.

L.R.  
13/3/47

473 H. Sam

M.E. (M.B.)

AL  
14/3

(6) - 16 -

D.No. 1369 ME/47.

(6)

CONFIDENTIAL.  
74.

TELEGRAM GRADE 'C'.

From..... Ambassador, Tehran.  
To..... Foreign, New Delhi.  
No. 81.

Dated 12th (Received 13th) March 1947.

T.O.O. 1200  
T.O.R. 2045

✓SN(1) Your telegram No. 1707 of March 2nd.

Memorandum received from Persian Government to the effect that they welcome with pleasure visit of Indian Trade Delegation for exchange of views on commercial relations between two countries. Ministry of Commerce and Industry will take all necessary steps to enable Delegation to fulfil its purpose (Group corrupt) given Tehran accord all proper facilities. Persian Government express hope that discussions with Delegation will lead to solution of all outstanding difficulties and to establishment of improved "widespread relations."

" Sic

FY, A.  
14th Mar.

HM: PS TO HM: M.E BR (3) EA DEPTT (ALL OFFICERS)  
PSV. CABINET SECY COPY TO COMMERCE DEPTT.

MEB (3)

17 (7)

24. 1403-ME/47

3475

Telegram En Clair.

From..... Ambassador Ankara

To..... Govgenext, New Delhi

Repeated Baghdad and Foreign Office (for India  
Office)

No 15

Dated 14th (recd 15th) March 1947

~~ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED~~  
T.O.O. 2153  
T.O.R. 1715

✓ SN(5)

My telegram 14 visit of Indian Trade  
Delegation. Turkish Government have now informed me officially  
that they welcome decision to send Delegation and are happy  
to see Government of India interest themselves in trade with  
Turkey

BAN  
16/3/47

HM: PS TO HM: ME BR (3) PSY CABINET SECY COMMERCE DT (2)

E.A.  
16/3/47

HM: PS TO HM: ME BR (3) EA DT (ALL OFFICERS) PSY  
CABINET SECY & COMMERCE DT (2)

ML BR (3) 18 (81) 24.1456-ME/47  
H.M. 3/17 [REDACTED]

TELEGRAM I.W.C. 3563

From ..... Secretary of State for India, London  
To ..... Governor General (External Affairs Deptt.)  
No. 3577 New Delhi.

Dated 17th (and received 18th) March 1947. T.O.O. 1610  
T.O.R. 0715

Following from Ankara to Government of India  
No. 15 March 14th repeated to Baghdad Foreign Office No. 186  
(for India\* Office).

My telegram No. 14 visit of Indian Trade Delegation.  
Turkish Government have now informed me officially  
that they welcome decision to send Delegation and are happy  
to see Government of India interesting themselves in trade  
with Turkey.

.....

HM: PS TO HM: ME BR (3) EA DT (ALL OFFICERS) PS  
CABINET SECY & COMMERCE DT (2)

E.A.  
18/3/47.